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BEAVER DAM LUTHERAN
CHURCH CEMETERY

Mary Frances Mauney
John D. Mauney, Jr.

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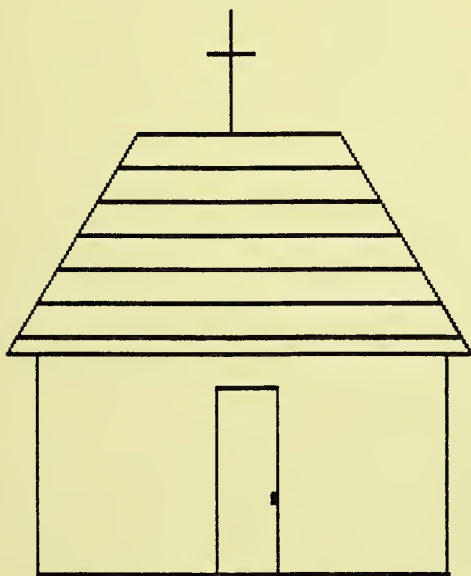
PRESENTED BY

Mary Frances Mauney

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Observations concerning...

*BEAVER DAM
LUTHERAN CHURCH*



"A Challenge for Our Time"

Beaver Dam Lutheran Church Cemetery

"A Challenge for Our Time"

Mrs. Mary Frances Mauney

and

The Rev. John D. Mauney, Jr., D.D.

August, 1992

*A most Delightful
Experience*
Mary Frances Mauney

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Preface:

The Legacy of Beaver Dam

It is a bright summer day in the year of our Lord, one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-two. In reverence, we stand at the gate of the rock wall which encircles old Beaver Dam Lutheran Church Cemetery. The enclosed area is truly the field and acre of our God. The graves are pilgrim shrines marked with timeworn soapstone slabs shaped and inscribed by hand. Here and there a wild violet blooms; in a nearby tree a singing bird is heard.

More than two hundred years ago, Christ erected His church just sixty feet from this hallowed bit of earth. The simple meeting house, 28-1/2 feet square, was built of hand hewn logs and rested on a foundation of native rocks. Today the rugged foundation remains alone on the grassy turf to proclaim God's glory.

In another day and age, German families of Lutheran faith gathered in this rustic house of worship, sat on rough handmade pews and in their native tongue sang hymns of old. It was here that the early settlers thanked God for their blessings and prayed to Him for guidance and protection in the untamed new world.

The names and dates on the aged tombstones once belonged to real people—real people of flesh and blood who had hearts and souls like we have today. As we gaze upon these unpretentious graves nestled quietly in this pastoral place, we ponder in meditation. Silently we speak to those men, women and children whose remains rest here. We ask:

"What were you really like? Tell us about your dreams and ambitions. Were your burdens heavy to bear? Were you happy of heart?"

Numerous questions crowd our minds. Yet, the graves send up no answers. Many life stories remain untold.

A still small voice is heard, "*Be still and know that I am God.*" A peace which passeth all understanding gently enfolds us, as we realize that long ago in a strange land this same small band of stalwart Christians planted a new home for God's Kingdom. These pioneer spirits endured danger, hardship, war, pestilence, and even death that coming generations might live in peace and plenty in the fertile hills and vales of Lincoln and Gaston Counties, where without fear, they could worship God.

As we turn to leave this sacred site, the still small voice speaks again: "*Come, take up your cross and follow me.*" We humbly bow our heads in assent and depart with joyful hearts.

— Mary Frances Mauney —

Introduction

Beaver Dam Lutheran Church, founded around 1786, is among the older Lutheran congregations in the Piedmont area—and, indeed, in the Lutheran Synod of North Carolina. It is the forerunner of St. Mark's Lutheran Church which is located in Gaston County about one mile west of the Beaver Dam Church site.

The ancestry of the founding congregation of Beaver Dam Lutheran Church can be traced back to South Germany. Many peace-loving Germans wishing to escape intolerable conditions in their fatherland, left their homes, braved the Atlantic and settled in the Colony of Pennsylvania. Conditions in the colony were not what they had expected to find. Quit rents (taxes) were high and the best farming land had already been taken by earlier settlers. Before long many of these Pennsylvania Germans began to think of finding new homes elsewhere.

Beginning around 1740 and continuing until the outbreak of the American Revolution, these settlers of Lutheran faith migrated south across the Blue Ridge into the Piedmont section of North Carolina. Some came into the Beaver Dam section of Tryon County (now Gaston County) where they found the opportunity to live, to work and to worship as a free and God-fearing folk.

These German people brought with them their heritage of the Lutheran faith; their Bibles, catechisms and hymn books were among their most prized possessions. Beside the waters of Beaver Dam Creek and Long Creek, they built their log cabin homes, and on a hillside nearby they established their graveyard and meeting house which later became known as Beaver Dam Lutheran Church.

Records of Beaver Dam/St. Mark's Lutheran Congregation show that Johann Gottfried Arends was the first pastor of the congregation, and that he served from 1786-1803. It is believed that the congregation was organized by Pastor Arends following his pastorate at Organ Church in Rowan County. In 1785 he had moved his residence to Lincoln County, and it is likely that he conducted services at Beaver Dam from that residential location for a number of years. Actually, Beaver Dam became a part of his parish in the course of time as he served St. Luke's Church near Lincolnton.

While it is difficult to establish the exact date of the organization of Beaver Dam Congregation, it is helpful to take note of a land grant that is quoted in *Three Mauney Families* by Bonnie Mauney Summers which says:

“Michael Eaker and Peter Rine, Trustees in Beaver Dam Congregation, or their successors, claiming 50 A of land for use of a meeting house and a graveyard for said congregation including where the Beaver Dam Meeting House now stands near the Little Mountain on the waters of Beaver Dam and Long Creek. Entered the 2nd March 1790.”

In the above grant, it is noted that the Beaver Dam Meeting House was in existence prior to the time the grant was made. In the *History of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina*, published in 1953 by the Synod, it is stated that the German settlers who first came to North Carolina often did not even bother to secure legal title to the lands on which they settled until they had established themselves, and were satisfied that they wished to remain in that particular location.

Listed among the early pastors of Beaver Dam Congregation in addition to Pastor Arends are the Rev. Paul Henkel and the Rev. David Henkle. The latter served the congregation regularly from 1814-1830, along with other congregations in the area. The church's first constitution, written in German and in English, was drawn by the Rev. David Henkel, and in May 1823 it was duly adopted. The exact wording is as follows:

“Anno 1823, May

We the subscribers belonging to the Congregation of Beaver Dam as members of the Evangelic Lutheran Church, agree to be governed by the Augsburg Confession of Faith and the Holy Scriptures.”

The original Church Record Book which is filed in the Archives of Lenoir Rhyne College, contains the above brief but pointed constitution. During this same period a church building was erected on the land, and was opened for a communion service on October 17, 1819. The site of that building, 28-1/2 feet square, is still detectable some 61 feet from the Old Church Cemetery.

An indenture made "this sixth day of March A.D., 1819, between Michael Rudisill of the County of Lincolnton and State of North Carolina of the one part, and Fredric Carpenter, John Rudisill, Jacob Aderholdt and David Crouse, trustees for the Congregation of Beaver Dam, of the second part" states that for five shillings, a parcel of land containing one acre shall be granted to the church. The indenture also records that since the acre is part of the plantation of Michael Rudisill, that Mr. Rudisill, his heirs and assignees agree "there shall be a passage for man and horse, and for carriage to the described land including the meeting house and graveyard, also (there shall be) the privilege of getting water out of (Mr. Rudisill's) his spring on the day of Divine Worship or Burials."

On May 10, 1856, the Congregation decided to build a new church about a mile west from the old one, and land was secured at the new site. This structure was a frame building 35 x 45 feet in dimensions. The new building was completed and dedicated May 8, 1858, and the name was changed from Beaver Dam Lutheran Church to St. Mark's Lutheran Church. The Rev. J.R. Peterson was the pastor during that time. A chip of stone from one of the rocks used in the foundation of the original log church on Beaver Dam Creek was placed in the cornerstone of the new church.

St. Mark's—Mother Church of Others in the Area

For the 134 years of its life as St. Mark's Lutheran Church, the congregation has grown and has prospered in its ministry to people in this entire area. Indeed, St. Mark's is the "Mother Church" that has nurtured the development of other Lutheran Congregations in this and in neighboring counties.

The Rev. Jesse R. Peterson, who had led the congregation in its relocation and name change in 1858, later became the organizing pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Kings Mountain in 1876. Most of the charter members came from St. Mark's Congregation.

The 10th pastor of St. Mark's, the Rev. Marcus L. Little, was the organizing pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Cherryville in 1881, with many members coming from St. Mark's Congregation.

So, members of St. Mark's Church shared significant roles in the development of these two congregations—and of many other congregations in Gaston, Cleveland, and Lincoln Counties. Members of the Eaker, Carpenter, Aderholdt, Mauney and other families have gone out from Beaver Dam/St. Mark's Congregation to share in the work of building the Kingdom of God in Lutheran and other Christian churches.

Furthermore, the influence of Beaver Dam/St. Mark's Lutheran Church has been broad and far-spread in the development of Christian Higher Education. It can be said that the present Lenoir Rhyne College has St. Mark's Church as its birthplace. During the pastorship of the Rev. M.L. Little, the first idea of building a Lutheran College was proposed. At the January 9, 1876 congregational meeting, "brother M.L. Little requested the members of St. Mark's Church to subscribe to such sums, as they felt able, to build a Lutheran College at Hickory, N.C."

Fifteen years later in 1891, the dream of those early church members became a reality and Lenoir Rhyne College opened her doors for the business of Christian Higher Education. For more than a century St. Matthew's, Kings Mountain and St. John's, Cherryville have given to Lenoir Rhyne many of its most staunch supporters and contributors, a number of whom have served as members of the College's Board of Trustees.

Cite the Example of the David and Fannie Mauney Family

An example of such a mission-minded Lutheran family would be that of David Mauney and his wife, Fannie Carpenter. David Mauney's father was Peter Mauney, and his grandfather was Christian Mauney. Both were members of Beaver Dam Lutheran Church, and were buried at Beaver Dam Lutheran Cemetery.

Among David and Fannie Mauney's six children were four who married and reared large families. Their two eldest—William Andrew Mauney and Jacob Simri Mauney—settled in Kings Mountain where they both loomed large in the development of that community—and they were significantly instrumental in the organization and development of St. Matthew's Lutheran Congregation in that developing city.

Their other two children—Barbara Mauney Rudisill (Mrs. Melville L.) and Samuel Sylvanus Mauney both settled in Cherryville and contributed greatly to the social and industrial development of Cherryville, and were very active in the organization of St. John's Lutheran Church in that growing community.

The many descendants of Andrew, Jake, Barbara, and Sam Mauney are widely scattered over this and many other sections of these United States—and they have taken their religious convictions with them. Today they share actively in the life of many Lutheran Congregations and communions of other Christian identity.

And similar observations could be made of other families—Eakers, Aderholdts and Carpenters among them—who have moved to other communities. So, Beaver Dam/St. Mark's Lutheran Church has made and continues to make an impact on human life near and far.

An illustration of how far-reaching this Christian influence can go would be found in the story of the development of Grace Lutheran Church, Hendersonville, North Carolina. When that mission church was organized with just 14 members, their first regular pastor was the Rev. John D. Mauney, of the Jacob Simri Mauney family in Kings Mountain. The little congregation bought the lot for the church building, and the children, and their families, of David and Fannie Mauney paid for the church building in its entirety. Just an example of the on-going mission-mindedness of the people of Old Beaver Dam Lutheran Church!

Beaver Dam Lutheran Cemetery
1786-1858

The old cemetery at Beaver Dam Lutheran Church and/or Beaver Dam Meeting House is picturesquely located on a rocky knoll with farm lands and green hills around. This rural burying ground became the final resting place for many pioneers of this area at least as early as 1858—and continued in use for about a half century. This venerable plot of land contains some 54 or more graves, most of which are marked with their original markers. Some 20 or more stones (many are field stones) with no inscription lie in the middle portion of the cemetery.

The cemetery is located on Whitesides Road (SR 1624) in northwestern Gaston County, North Carolina, on a farm owned by Herman and Carolyn R. Kiser and Sammy and Betty G. Kiser.

Gaston County, including the land of the Beaver Dam Cemetery, was formed in 1846 from Lincoln County. Lincoln County had been formed in 1779 from Tryon County when Tryon was abolished. Tryon County was formed in 1768 (effective 1769) from Mecklenberg County.

The cemetery is referred to as "Old Beaver Dam Lutheran Churchyard" in *Records*, edited by Maude Wales; as "Mauney-Eaker Cemetery" in *Old Grave Sites Revisited...*, edited by Mrs. Paul E. Rhyne and Mrs. John E. Grissop, 1986; and as "Beaver Dam Lutheran Church Cemetery" and "Beaver Dam Meeting House Cemetery" in *Three Mauney Families*, by Bonnie Mauney Summers, 1948.

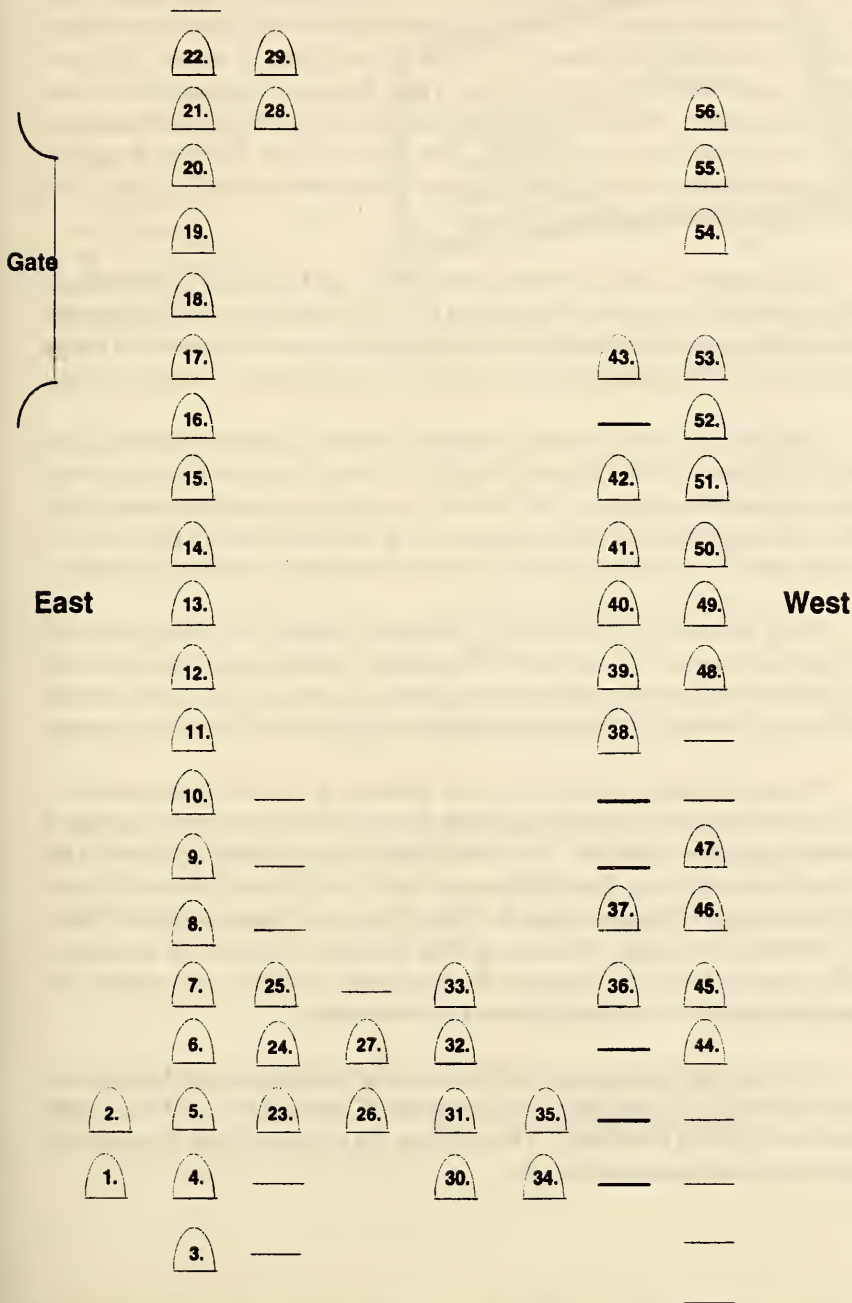
Graves in Beaver Dam Lutheran Church Cemetery

1. Amos Smith, d. 1860, aged 1 year, 1 month, 10 days.
2. James C. Van Dyke, d. 1854, aged 1 year, 2 months, 20 days.
3. Anna Smith, d. 1859, aged 37 years, 3 months, 18 days (daughter of Peter Mauney, of Christian).
4. Sarah A. Smith, d. 1855, aged 1 year, 7 months, 23 days.
5. Peter Mauney (Moony on stone), d. 1840, aged 50 years, 4 months (son of Christian).
6. George Houser, d. 1819, aged 7 or 17 years.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. C.M. (Christian Mauney, 1741-1815), d. 1815, Jan. 13 B.N.E. 1741.
- 13.
14. (Brick around a grave)
15. Catherine Mauney, d. 1844, aged 72 years (daughter of Jacob Moony, "Jr.").
- 16.
17. Date—1804
- 18.
- 19.
20. Moses Beam, d. 1840, aged 32 years, 4 months, 25 days (husband of Betsy Mauney, of Geo., of Christian).
21. John Beam, d. 1822, aged 52 years.
22. Mary Beam (Mary Hoyl), d. 1847, aged 78 years.

-
23. Michael Rudisill, d. 1833, aged 37 years, 6 months, 10 days.
 24. Sarah S. Rudisill, d. 1833, aged 10 years, 2 months.
 25. Infant child of Michael Rudisill, d. 1820, aged 27 days.
 26. Amanuel Roberts, d. 182-, aged 4 years.
 27. Jacob Privet, d. 1855.
 28. Peter Eaker, d. 1820, aged 81 years.
 29. Jane Eaker, d. 1848, aged 64 years.
 30. Elizabeth Aderhold, d. 1856, aged 76 years, 9 months, 11 days (daughter of Abram & Kath. Brinkley Heavner).
 31. Jacob Aderhold, d. 1853, aged, 77 years, 10 months, 16 days.
 - 32.
 33. Ester A. Aderhold, d. 1840, aged 35 years, 5 months, 22 days.
 34. John D.E. Aderhold, d. 1856, aged 9 months.
 35. Nancy Brown, consort of P.W. Brown, d. 1856, aged 45 years, 11 months, 7 days.
 36. —L O S—B. N. 2—D. m. 16-1814.
 - 37.
 38. Christopher M. (Mauney), d. —, aged 6-? years (son of Christian).
 39. Christian Eaker, d. 1857, aged 20 years, 10 months.
 40. Michael Eaker, d. 1848, aged 20 years, 10 months, 13 days.
 41. Ann C. Eaker, d. 1834, aged, 6 months, 23 days.
 42. Anderson L. Eaker, d. 1822, aged 5 months, 18 days.
 43. 1816 — Michael Eaker, b. 1765, m. Ruth Kuykendall — 1816.
 44. Philip Eaker, d. 1861, aged 30 years, 11 months, 7 days.
 45. James R. Eaker, d. 1857, aged 1 month, 13 days.
 46. Rachel A. Eaker, d. 1858, aged 1 month, 15 days.
 47. Sarah Eaker, d. 1852, aged 53 years, 5 months, 8 days.
 - 48.
 49. Frederick Carpenter, d. 1858, aged 19 years (son of Christopher Carpenter).
 50. Christopher Carpenter, d. 1854, aged, 45 years (son of #54, Frederick Carpenter).
 51. Infant son of Ann Carpenter, d. 1851.
 - 52.
 - 53.
 54. Frederick Carpenter, d. 1829, aged 57 years (son of Christian C Z).

Some 20 or more scattered stones with no inscriptions are found in the middle of the plot. Numbered spaces are definitely graves.

Numbers give location of graves listed on preceding sheet. Record made by Bonnie Mauney Summers (Mrs. F.R.) in March, 1948.



Pioneer Christian Mauney, a member of Beaver Dam Church who died in 1815, is buried "far from the maddening crowd" in this peaceful country graveyard. His log home which stood several miles south of Beaver Dam Church served from 1774 until 1783 as the courthouse of Colonial Tryon County. It was in Christian's home on August 14, 1775, that the famous Tryon Resolves was signed by 49 bold-spirited freeholders. Written in fiery language the document expressed an intense desire for *independence* from England. The original Tryon Resolves document, which preceded the American Declaration of Independence signed in July 1776, now rests in the State Archives in Raleigh.

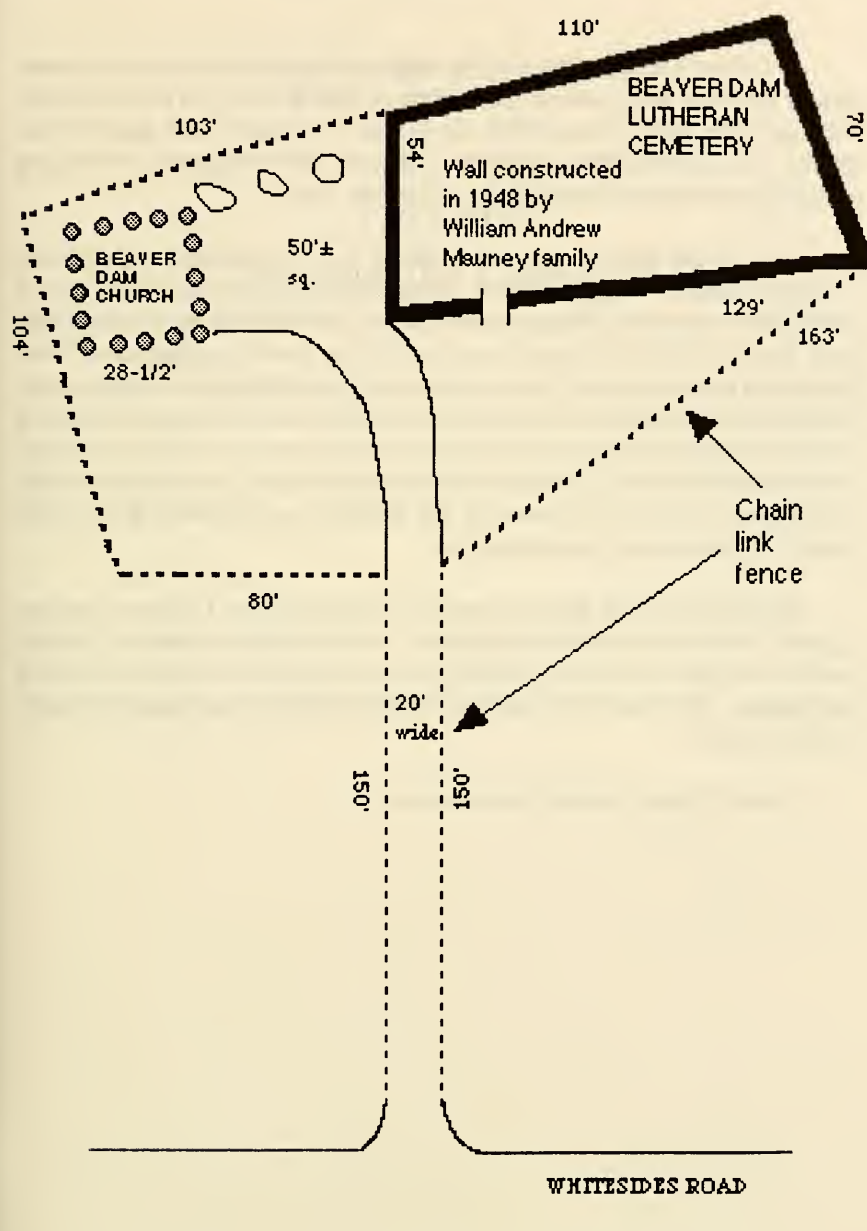
The property of which Beaver Dam Church and Cemetery were a part has changed ownership a number of times since 1858. The land is now used for farming. The immediate area around the Beaver Dam property is used as a pasture for a large herd of cattle. Little care has been taken of the church property for many years.

But in 1948, Bonnie Mauney Summers was the dynamic influence as the family of William Andrew Mauney cleared the cemetery and constructed a sturdy rock wall around the cemetery. And that wall, with its very attractive gate and large brass marker, has provided essential protection of the graves that are there for these some 45 years. For a number of years members of that family cared for the cemetery.

But it was noted in 1991 and 1992 that the cemetery was "overgrown with trees and underbrush, etc.", and that the Beaver Dam Cemetery and Church site were not marked and accessible to interested parties, and that, in view of its historic significance, it should be restored and opened up to visitors and interested persons.

Therefore John D. Mauney, Jr., D.R. Mauney, Jr., Heber Eaker, and Lewis Kiser looked into the possibility of gaining access to the property and restoring it to some appropriate condition. The Jacob Simri Mauney Family proposed to the William Andrew Mauney, Barbara Mauney Rudisill, and Samuel Sylvanus Mauney Families—along with support from the Heber Eaker and Claude Aderholdt Families—that funds be sought from among their families to open up the property to public access, restore the cemetery to appropriate condition, and provide for appropriate markers on nearby highways and roadways.

The response to this appeal has been amazing! Gifts have come from sources far and wide as family members have risen to the "Challenge for Our Time," as the effort was originally considered. The sketch on the following page illustrates the work that has now been completed.



We take this means of thanking Mr. and Mrs. Herman Kiser and Mr. and Mrs. Sammy Kiser for their gracious cooperation in making all of this effort possible. They gave the land—considerably more than a half-acre—and accepted the inconvenience to their farming operation in the area. And we thank them for helping us make this property improvement to an historic site.

And we are grateful also to the Pastor and Congregation of St. Mark's Lutheran Church for their assistance. Strangely, nearly all of the descendants of people who were buried at Beaver Dam Cemetery have moved to the more populace areas nearby, and are no longer members of the mother congregation. And generations have advanced. So it is appropriate that we who have ancestors in the Old Cemetery should take the lead in this restoration, and we hope to leave also in the *Beaver Dam Lutheran Cemetery Fund* a sizeable amount to help provide funds for care and maintenance of this site for many years to come. Funds in this account will be used *only* for maintenance for this property, and continued gifts for this purpose in years to come are appropriate.

But most of all, we thank the donors to the Beaver Dam Lutheran Cemetery Appeal. You have made this work possible. And we take this means of thanking you for your support, and of recognizing the *memorial gifts* that have been made for this purpose. We believe that our joint efforts will provide satisfaction for many years to come.

Listed by family groups the donors are. . .

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Lula & Frank Moose*

*In Memory of Mr. & Mrs.
Arthur E. Aderholdt*

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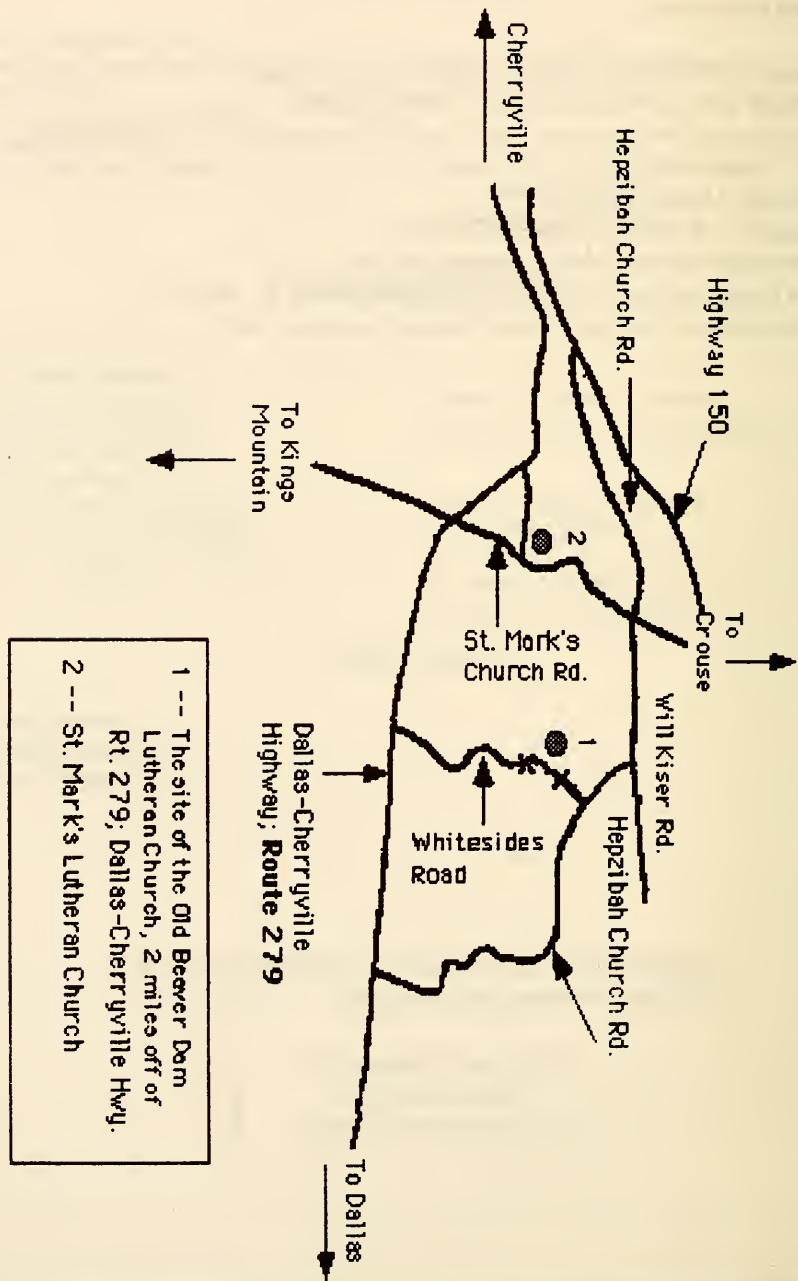
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Three Mauney Families, Bonnie Mauney Summers, 1948.

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Map Showing Location of Beaver Dam
and St. Mark's Lutheran Churches



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